

CAREER GUIDE FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIANS AND PARAMEDICS

SOC Code: 29-2041

Pay Band(s): 2 ([Salary Structure](#))

Standard Occupational Description: Assess injuries, administer emergency medical care, and extricate trapped individuals. Transport injured or sick persons to medical facilities.

Emergency Medical Technician and Paramedic positions in the Commonwealth are assigned to the following Role(s) in the [Direct Service Career Group](#):

[Direct Service Associate II](#)

Although Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedic positions in the Commonwealth primarily are located in the Direct Service Career Group, individuals may want to pursue related occupational or management opportunities depending upon individual education, training and experience.

Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics may also have career opportunities in the following Career Group(s):

[Health Care Technologies](#)

[Nursing/Physician Assistant Services](#)

[Health Care Compliance](#)

[Rehabilitation Therapies](#)

[Program Administration](#)

SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE, ABILITIES AND TASKS

(Technical and Functional Expertise)

Skills

Note: The technical and functional skills listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for EMTs and Paramedics commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the skills listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards for an individual state job must be based on the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job as indicated in the job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.

1. Adjusting actions in relation to others' actions.
2. Watching gauges, dials, or other indicators to make sure a machine is working properly.
3. Considering the relative costs and benefits of potential actions to choose the most appropriate one.
4. Actively looking for ways to help people.
5. Giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times.
6. Using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems.

7. Determining the kind of tools and equipment needed to do a job and controlling operations of equipment or systems.
8. Communicating effectively, orally and in writing, as appropriate for the needs of the audience to convey information effectively.
9. Being aware of others' reactions and understanding why they react as they do.
10. Performing routine maintenance on equipment and determining when and what kind of maintenance is needed.
11. Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work related documents.
12. Monitoring/Assessing performance of yourself, other individuals, or organizations to make improvements or take corrective action.
13. Understanding the implications of new information for both current and future problem-solving and decision-making.
14. Identifying complex problems and reviewing related information to develop and evaluate options and implement solutions.
15. Identifying measures or indicators of system performance and the actions needed to improve or correct performance, relative to the goals of the system.
16. Using scientific and mathematics rules and methods to solve problems.
17. Managing one's own time and the time of others.
18. Determining how a system should work and how changes in conditions, operations, and the environment will affect outcomes.
19. Generating or adapting equipment and technology to serve user needs.
20. Determining causes of operating errors and deciding what to do about it.

Knowledge

Note: *The technical and functional knowledge statements listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for EMTs and Paramedics commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the knowledge listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards for an individual state job must be based on the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job as indicated in the job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.*

The Knowledge of:

1. The information and techniques needed to diagnose and treat human injuries, diseases, and deformities. This includes symptoms, treatment alternatives, drug properties and interactions, and preventive health-care measures.
2. Principles, methods, and procedures for diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation of physical and mental dysfunctions, and for career counseling and guidance.
3. Plant and animal organisms, their tissues, cells, functions, interdependencies, and interactions with each other and the environment.
4. Principles and methods for moving people or goods by air, rail, sea, or road, including the relative costs and benefits.
5. Transmission, broadcasting, switching, control, and operation of telecommunications systems.
6. The structure and content of the English language including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
7. The chemical composition, structure, and properties of substances and of the chemical processes and transformations that they undergo. This includes uses of chemicals and their interactions, danger signs, production techniques, and disposal methods.
8. Administrative and clerical procedures and systems such as word processing, managing files and records, stenography and transcription, designing forms, and other office procedures and terminology.

9. Principles and processes for providing customer and personal services. This includes customer needs assessment, meeting quality standards for services, and evaluation of customer satisfaction.

Abilities

Note: The technical and functional abilities listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for EMTs and Paramedics commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the abilities listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards for an individual state job must be based on the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job as indicated in the job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.

The **Ability** to:

1. Tell when something is wrong or is likely to go wrong. It does not involve solving the problem, only recognizing there is a problem.
2. Listen to and understand information and ideas presented through spoken words and sentences.
3. Communicate information and ideas in speaking so others will understand.
4. Apply general rules to specific problems to produce answers that make sense.
5. Quickly make sense of, combine, and organize information into meaningful patterns.
6. Communicate information and ideas in writing so others will understand.
7. Remember information such as words, numbers, pictures, and procedures.
8. Arrange things or actions in a certain order or pattern according to a specific rule or set of rules (e.g., patterns of numbers, letters, words, pictures, mathematical operations).
9. Read and understand information and ideas presented in writing.
10. Exert maximum muscle force to lift, push, pull, or carry objects.
11. Concentrate on a task over a period of time without being distracted.
12. Combine pieces of information to form general rules or conclusions (includes finding a relationship among seemingly unrelated events).
13. Quickly and repeatedly adjust the controls of a machine or a vehicle to exact positions.
14. See details at close range (within a few feet of the observer) and see details at a distance.
15. Quickly respond (with the hand, finger, or foot) to a signal (sound, light, picture) when it appears.
16. Speak clearly so others can understand you.
17. Add, subtract, multiply, or divide quickly and correctly.
18. Quickly move your hand, your hand together with your arm, or your two hands to grasp, manipulate, or assemble objects.
19. Identify and understand the speech of another person.
20. Choose quickly between two or more movements in response to two or more different signals (lights, sounds, pictures). It includes the speed with which the correct response is started with the hand, foot, or other body part.

Tasks

Note: The following is a list of sample tasks typically performed by EMTs and Paramedics. Employees in this occupation will not necessarily perform all of the tasks listed.

1. Administers first-aid treatment and life support care to sick or injured persons in pre-hospital setting.
2. Assists in removal and transport of victims to treatment center.
3. Assesses nature and extent of illness or injury to establish and prioritize medical procedures.
4. Observes, records, and reports patient's condition, and reactions to drugs and treatment, to physician.

5. Monitors patient's condition, using electrocardiograph.
6. Communicates with treatment center personnel to arrange reception of victims and to receive instructions for further treatment.
7. Assists treatment center personnel to obtain and record victim's vital statistics, and to administer emergency treatment.
8. Assists treatment center personnel to obtain information relating to circumstances of emergency.
9. Drives mobile intensive care unit to specified location, following instructions from emergency medical dispatcher.
10. Maintains vehicles and medical and communication equipment, and replenishes first-aid equipment and supplies.

INTERESTED?

Like people, occupations have traits or characteristics. These characteristics give important clues about the nature of the work and work environment, and give you an opportunity to match your own personal interests to a specific occupation. When you choose a job in an occupation that matches your own interests you have taken an important step in planning a successful and rewarding career.

Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics perform work that is characterized in three ways:

Social

Social occupations frequently involve working with, communicating with, and teaching people. These occupations often involve helping or providing service to others.

Realistic

Realistic occupations frequently involve work activities that include practical, hands-on problems and solutions. They often deal with plants, animals, and real-world materials like wood, tools, and machinery. Many of the occupations require working outside, and do not involve a lot of paperwork or working closely with others.

Investigative

Investigative occupations frequently involve working with ideas, and require an extensive amount of thinking. These occupations can involve searching for facts and figuring out problems mentally.

LICENSURE, REGISTRATION, OR CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Certification is generally required for Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedic positions in state government. However, in order to improve career advancement opportunities, you should consider the advantages of registration and include this step in your self-development plan. Specific training according to individual agency requirements may also be necessary. Contact the specific state agency you are interested in for additional data and information using the State Agency Directory Search <http://vaquick.state.va.us/> web page.

Certification information can be found on the Virginia Department of Health, Office of Emergency Medical Services <http://www.vdh.state.va.us/oems/index.asp> website.

EDUCATIONAL, TRAINING, AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Continuing education is generally expected, and may be required for Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics. Sources of educational, training, and learning opportunities include can be found on the Virginia Department of Health, Office of Emergency Medical Services <http://www.vdh.state.va.us/oems/index.asp> website.

There are two recognized apprenticeable specialties associated with this occupation:
Emergency Medical Technician; Paramedic

To learn about specific apprenticeship opportunities, please consult the Virginia U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Apprenticeship Training, Employer and Labor Services, Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training office at:

400 North 8th Street
Federal Building – Suite 404
Richmond, Virginia 23219-23240
804-771-2488

For general information about apprenticeships, training, and partnerships with business, visit the U.S. Department of Labor [Office of Apprenticeship Training, Employer and Labor Services \(OATELS\)](#) website.

COMMONWEALTH COMPETENCIES

Competencies are a set of identified behaviors, knowledge, skills, and abilities that directly and positively impact the success of employees and the organization. Competencies can be observed and measured. When consistently demonstrated, competencies make employees particularly effective in their work. Competencies help lay out a road map to career success. You can use the Commonwealth Competencies to help improve your individual performance by adopting behaviors that make high performing employees successful in their jobs. In this way, you can use the Commonwealth Competencies for your further professional development.

The Commonwealth Competencies are:

1. Technical and Functional Expertise
2. Understanding the Business
3. Achieving Results
4. Serving the Customer
5. Teamwork
6. Interpersonal and Communication Skills
7. Leadership and Personal Effectiveness

The above competencies may be applied to employees throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. They can be rank-ordered by agencies and hiring managers to represent the needs of a specific job. The rank ordering will change depending upon the occupation, an organization's priorities, the actual job requirements, and the supervisor's preferences.

Career success is both about what you do (applying your technical knowledge, skills, and ability) and how you do it (the consistent behaviors you demonstrate and choose to use) while

interacting and communicating with others. Hopefully, by studying the Commonwealth competencies, identifying your developmental opportunities, and working to refine your own competence, you can take charge of your career!

For additional information about the **Commonwealth Competencies** go to: http://jobs.state.va.us/cc_planningctr.htm. For the competencies, we first list the competencies and then define each. Finally, we list competency indicators; to describe what successful performance looks like.

COMMONWEALTH CAREER PATH

Career opportunities in the Commonwealth are not limited to moving “up” to the next highest role and pay band, changing positions, or to becoming a supervisor. That’s because most roles describe a broad group of occupationally related positions that perform a range of work that requires increased knowledge and skills. For that reason, Commonwealth roles describe the career paths within the same or higher-level role for the same or different Career Group. The broad salary range and the Commonwealth’s pay practices provide flexibility in recognizing career development and advancement. ([Salary Structure](#))

For example:

PAY BAND	ROLES	PAY BAND	ROLES
1	Direct Service Associate I	1 →	Direct Service Associate I
			↓
2	Direct Service Associate II	2 →	Direct Service Associate II
			↓
3	Direct Service Associate III	3 →	Direct Service Associate III
			↓
4	Direct Service Associate IV	4 →	Direct Service Associate IV

Sample Career Path for EMTs and Paramedics

Direct Service Associate I

The Direct Service Associate I role provides career tracks for assistants (such as public health, day care, respiratory therapy) and hospital attendants performing entry-level to journey-level responsibilities requiring little prior training or experience and the work is well defined.

Direct Service Associate II

The Direct Service Associate II role provides career tracks for health care support technicians, such as nursing assistants, physical/occupational therapist aide, pharmacy assistants, psychiatric workers, medication assistants, and others who perform health care support responsibilities ranging from entry-level to journey-level. This role also provides career tracks for

supervisors of hospital attendants. Duties are varied, requiring either knowledge in a variety of areas or specialized knowledge to perform tasks in assigned specialty areas. and procedures relevant to the program.

Direct Service Associate III

The Direct Service Associate III role provides career tracks for health care support specialists that are either service delivery experts or supervisors. As service delivery experts, employees provide or lead specialized services that support the work of interdisciplinary treatment teams, licensed clinical staff, and professional counselors. This role also provides career tracks for human rights advocates. As supervisors, employees supervise other Direct Service Workers, develop staff schedules, evaluate staff performance, serve as members of interdisciplinary treatment teams, make minor changes in treatment and program plans, write reports, make oral presentations, and review client records for appropriate documentation.

Direct Service Associate IV

The Direct Service Associate IV role provides career tracks for dental laboratory technicians who perform duties ranging from advanced level to supervisory. The work requires specialized expertise in the fabrication and repair of a variety of dental applications used by dentists or dental students for their patients.

ADDITIONAL OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT:

O*NET (Occupational Information Network)
http://online.onetcenter.org/gen_search_page

Virginia Employment Commission
<http://www.alex.vec.state.va.us/>

Career One Stop
<http://www.careeronestop.org/>

Virginia Career Resource Network
<http://www.vacrn.net/>

Careers in Dietetics
<http://www.webdietitians.org/Public/Careers/94.cfm>